

## Rapportage Schoolondersteuningsprofiel

### De Violen school IPS Hilversum



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*The following is a summary of Peter de Vries' report regarding the school support profile for our school.*

## Seminarium Profile Scan

The Violen school IPS Hilversum is an international primary school. Pupils who attend the school only stay in the Netherlands temporarily and the language of instruction is English. The school population has 42 nationalities, a total of 327 students attend the school. Each year, approximately one third of the population of school changes though the transient nature of the parents. The average stay for the students in the school is three years.

The school is committed to a high quality education in English within the Dutch educational system. Self-discipline, motivation and excellent performance are of paramount importance.

The motto of the school is **"Quality For All and All For Quality"**.

The school is an International Baccalaureate (IB) Organisation World School. This global organization is responsible for its own quality standard (standards and practices) and a private inspection of this quality. In the vision of the IB are central concepts: development, care, striving for a better, peaceful world, intercultural education and respect. Besides the IB, school participates in the Dutch network of international schools named Dutch International Schools.

## The school profile

Basic support: describes the support the school itself and the groups within the organization offers to all students. The basic support includes the actions of the school open to all students, such as providing remedial assistance, the use of teaching assistants, guidance and coaching by the SENCO and /or the use of other experts (e.g. language and computing specialists).

The IB has with a standard curriculum framework, called the PYP, or Primary Years Programme. This curriculum framework prescribes a number of principles, by which education should be given shape. The organization and educational development are thus fairly standardized. This also applies to the program for literacy, numeracy and other content which can vary greatly by country and are not centrally prescribed. Additionally, the curriculum should always be adapted to the population of students in the group. A group 5 can not follow the exact annual program each year, because the student population varies widely and the alignment educational needs of both individual students and the group may need to deviate from standard programs. The school works with unit-education, which is very similar to a project or theme oriented education. Teachers are hereby challenged to translate the curriculum into meaningful, varied learning activities that facilitate constructivist learning while ensuring the learning continuity is maintained. The school is currently working with six weeks intervention plans and individual program descriptions. At the same time, the school is implementing a NBA (needs based approach). This method is similar to action-oriented work and the *1-Zorgroute (single support route)*, which reflect educational needs, tailored instruction and preventive education as being central. The school structurally works with group discussions and student discussions. Learning Support staff provide guidance for individual students or groups who have similar instructional needs. Individual file structure is a concern for the school. It should be noted that it is not easy to follow pupils carefully when there has been regular changes in school and even country. The inspection visit in 2011 pointed out, in this connection, that at the individual level, a better analysis could be made of any student learning or developmental problems so that sharper goals can be formulated and a more targeted approach made possible. Moreover, the effectiveness of the intervention plans needs careful evaluation within the school support system. Finally, the student monitoring system is currently mainly used to track follow student progress. Teachers will be able to use the student monitoring system within NBA to increasingly give more form to their group plans.

Breadth of support: concerns support from the school environment. The school participates in the SWV Annie MG Schmidt / UNITA and makes regular use of the board level support structure of the SWV.

Depth of support: describes support in specialist facilities, settings and groups. The responsibility for the pupil is then transferred to this facility.

## **Impressions from the structured interviews with management & SENCO**

Due to the special nature of the school, the conversation with the headmaster was mainly devoted to the organization of the school. Specific questions focusing on the role of the school in the education continuum appropriate for this school were considered to be less relevant.

From the discussion it was evident that the professional culture acknowledged by the inspection was palpable and visibly present in the school. The school is inspected and evaluated from different perspectives and official bodies, and in addition the school itself has also worked on a quality system in which teachers are 'monitored'. This system is based on the SBL-competencies and processed in a 360-degree feedback system, in which teachers develop their own capabilities and identify coaching needs.

It is established that the school could only play a very limited role in inclusive education as known in the Dutch system. Also, parents of severe special needs students could be interpreted as opting less often for a life as an expat. These pupils are not registered at the school.

It is evident that the school has a lot of facilities available for the guidance of the students. Thus, the school has 37 hours remedial teaching or learning support and 22 hours for English language support (English as an Additional Language-EAL). Finally, the school has 48 hours available for support in the area of the Dutch language (Host Country Language), 3 teaching assistants and an average of 4 interns.

There is no certified support specialist (masters degree) within the school.

## **Impressions of the structured interview with parents**

The interviewed parents were asked about the TOPS of the school and the TIPS that parents would like to jointly formulate based on their experiences for the school. The aspects mentioned below are included in this report, because all present parents agreed with them.

### **Said tops:**

- The unit-thematic education / broad educational
- The mix of international culture with the Dutch culture (e.g. celebrations)
- The inclusion or integration of new students or new families within the community of the school
- Approachability of teachers, openness, accessibility and responsiveness of teachers
- Role of the Director: firstly as "culture carrier" of the school, and secondly as 'quality controller'
- Good coordination in the supervision of pupils in special counselling from school and home questions (ADHD as an example)
- Many staff, allowing small groups are possible within the school and much guidance available

### **The tips of the parents:**

- Give us a better understanding of how my child is doing and performing (grades) and what expectations I as a parent can have both short and long term
- Provide more challenge for excellent students, so that they can develop optimally
- Support pupils who lack the required degree of independence or the self-discipline
- Although there may be variation in the way the teachers teaching their shape and content, there should be guarded against too much space and differences between teachers and deviation from the learning or the school curriculum

### **Impressions of the structured interview with students**

In the conversation with students their opinion was requested as expert connoisseurs of the school. They were asked about the process in the classroom, strengths and possible improvements to the school and the vision of diversity (can all students join in your lessons).

#### **Tops:**

- The teachers give good lessons, explain things well and help you when needed, they give varied lesson so we do not always work with a book and notebook on assignments
- The school is not too big and has small class sizes (you feel at home and you quickly know how to find your class)
- Teachers are nice and funny, they are reliable
- If there is something or a problem in the class, teachers intervene quickly and well
- It's good to work with presentations: you learn a lot from it yourself, you learn to work together and learn from what others present

#### **Tips:**

There was no tip, except the opportunity to be able throw snowballs, though they themselves have indicated that this could be quite dangerous in a crowded schoolyard.

### **Impression class observations**

The class observations serve as validation of the Self-evaluation Scan. For observations in classes where there is diversity in student care, if available, recognized individual action plans and group plans.

Within the Violen School it was not possible to use the standard set of guidelines and group visits in accordance with the guidelines of the SPS smoothly. Instead, a number of groups were visited where the director of the school provided information regarding the educational process.

## **Reflection / Feedback**

It was observed in the groups that teachers generally organise the teaching and learning in a very pleasant way. A high level of student involvement and task orientation was shown. Within the visited groups, there was a very warm, pleasant and stimulating educational environment. Teachers show themselves to be very skilled both pedagogically and didactically.

## **Conclusion from the Profile Scan:**

It was determined that the school holds a special position within SWV. Due to this position it is not possible to describe the school as a regular primary school such as the case for all other schools.

In agreement with school management we have endeavoured to do justice to the school within the obligations of the school support profiles. This has resulted in more time being devoted to investigating the educational system and special character of the school than looking for the connections with inclusive education and school profiles.

A number of elements for a school profile scan were applied in the school in adapted form.